

THE CANADIAN
Biographical Dictionary

AND

PORTRAIT GALLERY

OF

EMINENT AND SELF-MADE MEN.

QUEBEC AND MARITIME PROVINCES VOLUME.



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CHEVALIER CHAS. P. F. BAILLAIRGÉ, M.S.,

QUEBEC.

THE subject of this sketch, who is a Chevalier of the Order of St. Sauveur de Monte Reale, Italy, was born in September, 1827, and for the past thirty-three years has been practising his profession as an engineer, architect and surveyor, in the city of Quebec. Since 1856 he has been a member of the Board of Examiners of Land Surveyors for the province, and since 1875 its chairman ; he is an honorary member of the Society for the Generalization of Education in France ; and has been the recipient of thirteen medals of honour and of seventeen diplomas, &c., from learned societies and public bodies in France, Belgium, Italy, Russia, Japan, &c. Mr. Baillairgé's father, who died in 1865, at the age of 68, was born in Quebec, and for over thirty years was road surveyor of that city. His mother, Charlotte Janverin Horsley, who is still living, was born in the Isle of Wight, England, and was a daughter of Lieutenant Horsley, R.N. His grandfather on the paternal side, P. Florent Baillairgé, is of French descent, and was connected, now nearly a century ago, with the restoration of the Basilica, Quebec. The wife of the latter was Mlle Cureux de St. Germain, also of French descent.

Our subject married, in 1845, Euphémie, daughter of Mr. Jean Duval, and step-daughter of the Hon. John Duval, for many years Chief Justice of Lower Canada, by whom he had eleven children, four of whom only survive. His wife dying in February, 1878, he, in April of the following year, married Anne, eldest daughter of Captain Benjamin Wilson, of the English navy, by whom he has one son.

Mr. Baillairgé was educated at the Seminary of Quebec, but, finding the curriculum of studies too lengthy, he left that institution some time before the termination of the full course of ten years, and entered into a joint apprenticeship as architect, engineer and surveyor. During this apprenticeship he devoted himself to mathematical and natural science studies, and received diplomas for his proficiency in 1848, at the age of 21. At that period he entered upon his profession, and for the last fourteen years has filled the post of city engineer of Quebec, is manager of its water works, and since 1875 has been engineer, on the part of the city, in and over the North Shore, Piles and Lake St. John Railways.

Mr. Baillairgé has held successive commissions in the militia, as ensign, lieutenant, and captain ; and in 1860, and for several years thereafter, was hydrographic surveyor to the Quebec Board of Harbour Commissioners. In 1861, he was elected vice-president of the Association of Architects and Civil Engineers of Canada. In 1858, he was elected, and again in 1861 unanimously re-elected, to represent the St. Louis ward in the City Council, Quebec. In 1863, he was called for two years to Ottawa, to act as joint architect of the Parliament and Departmental buildings, then in course of erection. Interests of considerable magnitude were then at stake between the Government and the contractors, claims amounting to nearly half a million of money having to be adjusted. In connection with his employment by the Government, Mr. Baillairgé found, that to continue his services he must be a party to some sacrifice of principle, which, rather than consent to, he was indiscreet enough to tell the authorities of the time. This excess of virtue was too moral for the appointing power and more than it was disposed to brook in an employee of the Government. The difficulty was, therefore, got over by giving Mr. Baillairgé his *feuille de route*, a compliment to his integrity of which he has ever since been justly proud. He shortly afterwards returned to Quebec.

During his professional career, Mr. Baillairgé designed and erected numerous private residences in and around Quebec, as well as many public buildings, including the Asylum and the Church of the Sisters of Charity, the Laval University building, the new gaol, the music hall, several churches, both in the city and in the adjoining parishes, that of Ste Marie, Beauce being much admired on account of the beauty and regularity of its interior. The "Monument des Braves de 1760" was erected in 1860, on the St. Foy road, after a design by him and under his superintendence. The Government, the clergy and others have often availed themselves of his services in arbitration on knotty questions of technology, disputed boundaries, builders claims, surveys and reports on various subjects.

In 1872, Mr. Baillairgé suggested, and in 1878 designed and carried out what is now known as the Dufferin Terrace, Quebec, a structure some 1,500 feet in length, overlooking the St. Lawrence from a height of 182 feet, and built along the face of the cliff under the Citadel. This terrace was inaugurated in 1878 by their Excellencies the Marquis of Lorne and H.R.H. the Princess Louise, who pronounced it a splendid achievement.

In 1873, Mr. Baillairgé designed and built the aqueduct bridge over the St. Charles, the peculiarity about which is that the structure forms an arch as does the aqueduct pipe it encloses, whereby, in case of the destruction of the surrounding wood-work by fire, the pipe being self-supporting, the city may not be deprived of water while re-constructing the frost-protecting tunnel enclosure.

At the age of seventeen, the subject of our sketch built a double cylindrical steam carriage for traffic on ordinary roads.

From 1848 to 1865 he delivered a series of lectures, in the old Parliament buildings and elsewhere, on astronomy, light, steam and the steam engine, pneumatics, acoustics, geometry, the atmosphere, and other kindred subjects, under the patronage of the Canadian and other Institutes ; and in 1872, in the rooms of the Literary and Historical Society, Quebec, under the auspices of that Institution, he delivered an exhaustive lecture on geometry, mensuration, and the stereometrical (a mode of cubing all solids by one and the same rule, thus reducing the study and labour of a year to that of a day or an hour), which he had then but recently invented, and for which he was made honorary member of several learned societies, and received the numerous medals and diplomas already alluded to.

The following letter from the Ministry of Public Instruction, Russia, is worthy of insertion as explanatory of the advantages of the stereometrical :

MINISTÈRE DE L'INSTRUCTION PUBLIQUE,
Saint-Petersbourg, le 15 février 1877.

No. 1823,
A. M. BAILLAIRGÉ,
Architecte à Québec,

MONSIEUR.—Le comité scientifique du ministère de l'Instruction Publique, (de Russie), reconnaissant l'incontestable utilité de votre "Tableau Stéréométrique" pour l'enseignement de la géométrie en général, de même que pour son application pratique à d'autres sciences, éprouve un plaisir tout particulier à joindre aux suffrages des savants de l'Europe et de l'Amérique sa complète approbation, en vous informant que le susdit tableau, avec toutes ses applications, sera recommandé aux écoles primaires et moyennes, pour en compléter les cabinets et les collections mathématiques, et inscrit dans les catalogues des ouvrages approuvés par le ministère de l'Instruction Publique.

On fera, en outre, des dispositions pour faire venir de l'Amérique à Saint-Petersbourg quelques exemplaires de vos éditions, et vous êtes prié instamment, monsieur, d'avoir la bonté d'informer le comité s'il n'existe pas quelque part en Europe, un dépôt de vos ouvrages mathématiques.

Agréez, monsieur, l'assurance de ma haute considération.

Le chef du département au ministère de l'Instruction Publique.

E. DE BRADKER.

And the Quebec *Mercury*, of the 10th July, 1878, has the following in relation to a second letter from the same source :

It will be remembered that in February, 1877, Mr. Baillairgé received an official letter from the Minister of Public Instruction, of St. Petersburg, Russia, informing him that his new system of mensuration had been adopted in all the primary and medium schools of that vast empire. After a lapse of eighteen months, the system having been found to work well, Mr. Baillairgé has received an additional testimonial from the same source, informing him that the system is to be applied in all the polytechnics schools of the Russian empire."

Mr. Baillairgé has since that time, given occasional lectures in both languages on industrial art and design, and on other interesting and instructive topics, and is now engaged on a dictionary or dictionnaires of the consonances of both the French and English languages.

In 1866, he wrote his treatise on geometry and trigonometry, plane and pherical, with mathematical tables—a volume of some 900 pages octavo, and has since edited several works and pamphlet on like subjects.

In his work on geometry, which, by the way, is written in the French language, Mr. Baillairgé has, by a process explained in the preface, reduced to fully half their number the two hundred and odd propositions of the first six books of Euclid, while deducing and retaining all the results arrived at by the great geometer.

Mr. Baillairgé, moreover, shows the practical use and adaptation of problems and theorems, which might otherwise appear to be of doubtful utility, as of the ratio between the tangent, whole secant and part of the secant without the circle, in the laying out of railroad and other curves running through given points, and numerous other examples. His treatment of spherics and of the affections of the sides and angles is, in many respects, novel, and more easy of apprehension by the general student.

In a note at foot of page 330, Mr. Baillairgé shows the fallacy of Thorpe's pretended solution of the trisection of an angle, at which the poor man had laboured for thirty-four years, and takes the then Government to task for granting Mr. Thorpe a patent for the discovery.

In February 1874, he visited Europe, and it was on the 15th of March of that year that he received his first laurels at the "Grand Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers," Paris.

Mr. Baillairgé lately issued a report on the defects in the mode of building in this province, and recommended the establishment of a Polytechnic School for the Province of Quebec, which is now shortly about to be opened in the provincial capital under Government patronage. It is due to the praiseworthy efforts of the Rev. Brother Aphraates, superior of the order of Christian Brothers, and of which institution Mr. Baillairgé, it is understood, is to be professor of technology and engineering.

Some of Mr. Baillairgé's annual reports on civic affairs are very interesting and instructive ; that of 1878, on "the municipal situation," is particularly worthy of perusal. His report of 1872 was more especially sought after by almost every city engineer in the Canadas and United States, on account of the varied information it conveyed. It may also be remembered, as illustrative of the versatility of his talent and of his humoristic turn of mind, that a comedy, "Le Diable Devenu Cuisinier," written by him in the French language, was, in 1873, played in the "Music Hall," and again in the "Salle Jacques Cartier," Quebec, by the Maugard Company, then in the city, to the great merriment of all present.

Nor will the members of "Le Club des 21," composed as it is of the *littérati*, scientists and artists of Quebec, under the presidency of the Count of Premio Réal, Consul-General of Spain for Canada, soon forget how, in March, 1879, Mr. Baillairgé, in a paper read at one of the sittings of the Club, around a well-spread board, successively portrayed and hit off the peculiarities of each and every member of the club, and of the count himself, while at the same time doing full justice to the abilities of all.

Mr. Baillairgé is a close and industrious worker, devoting fourteen hours out of the twenty-four to his professional callings, and again robbing the night for the time to pursue his literary and scientific pursuits.

In politics, if he may be said to have any, he is inclined to Liberalism, but he is of too independent a character to be tied to a party, preferring to treat each question on its merits, irrespective of its promoters.

The subject of this sketch is brother to G. F. Baillairgé, Deputy Minister of Public Works of the Dominion, and grand nephew to François Baillairgé, an eminent painter and sculptor "de l'Académie Royale de Peinture et Sculpture, France," who carved some of the statues in the Basilica, and whose studio in St. Louis Street (the quaint old one story building, now Driscoll's livery stable) was at that time so often visited by Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, father of Queen Victoria, during his sojourn in Quebec.

A portrait of Mr. Baillairgé, but which, however, does not do him justice, accompanied by a brief biographical notice, appeared in *L'Opinion Publique* of the 25th April 1878. The *Rivista Universale*, of Italy, also published his portrait and a biographical sketch of Mr. Baillairgé's career, in February of 1878.

Since the above was edited, in 1879, Mr. Baillairgé has been the recipient of the following additional testimonials :

Royal Canadian Academy of Arts.

Grenville St., Toronto, Jan. 7th 1880.

DEAR SIR,

I am commanded by His Excellency the Governor General (Marquis of Lorne) to inform you that he has been pleased to nominate you as an associate of the New Canadian Academy.

(Signed), L. N. O'BRIEN,

President.

Royal Society of Canada.

Montreal, March 7th 1882.

SIR,

I have the honor to intimate to you by request of the Governor General (Marquis of Lorne,) that His Excellency hopes you will allow yourself to be named by him as one of the twenty original members of The Mathematical, Physical and Chemical Section of the New Literary and Scientific Society of Canada, the first meeting of which will be held at Ottawa on the 25th of May. Should you accept be good enough to state what work you wish associated with your name.

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your most obedient,

I. STERRY HUNT,

President of the Mathematical Physical & Chemical Section.

C. Baillairgé Esq.

Hotel du gouvernement.

Québec, 12 avril 1882.

A Monsieur le Chevalier Baillairgé, Québec

MON CHER MONSIEUR,

Je vous prie d'accepter mes sincères remerciements pour l'envoi que vous m'avez fait d'une série complète de vos œuvres scientifiques, ainsi que du volume de la " Galerie " où se trouve votre biographie et votre portrait. J'ai été très sensible à cette attention de votre part ; vos travaux et votre réputation qui s'est fait jour même en Europe font honneur, permettez moi de vous le dire, à notre patrie et à la nationalité franco-canadienne. Notre jeune pays compte encore peu d'illustrations dans le monde de la science, et il doit être d'autant plus fier de ceux de ses enfants qui attirent sur eux l'attention des hommes dont l'opinion fait autorité.

Veillez accepter ma photographie et agréer, Monsieur le Chevalier, l'hommage de la parfaite considération avec laquelle j'ai l'honneur d'être,

Votre obéissant serviteur,

THEODORE ROBITAILLE.

Lieutenant-Gouverneur de la Province de Québec.

In July 1882 Mr. Baillairgé was unanimously elected president of the newly incorporated body of Land Surveyors and Engineers of the Province of Quebec.

Hotel du Gouvernement.

Québec 18 juin 1877.

MONSIEUR,

Permettez-moi de vous offrir mes remerciements pour l'envoi que vous m'avez fait de votre ouvrage " Traité de Géométrie et de Trigonométrie qui vous fait tant d'honneur ainsi qu'à notre pays.

Comme président de la Commission Canadienne à Philadelphie j'ai eu occasion de faire examiner votre tableau stéréométrique par les représentants de la Grande-Bretagne, de la France, de l'Allemagne, de la Russie, de l'Espagne, du Portugal, de l'Italie et, à une seule exception il était connu et hautement apprécié par eux tous.

Monsieur Lavoine, Ingénieur des Ponts et Chaussées, que je connus à Philadelphie, où il avait la direction de l'exposition des modèles des Travaux Publics

de France, m'en parla alors, de même que durant une visite qu'il me fit à Ottawa, l'automne dernier, de la manière la plus flatteuse pour vous et pour les Canadiens.

Je suis heureux, Monsieur, de ces témoignages qui vous honorent et de savoir que vos travaux, tant de fois couronnés dans votre pays et à l'étranger, viennent de l'être encore à l'Exposition Universelle de 1876 à Philadelphie.

Je demeure,

Monsieur,

Votre obéissant serviteur,

L. LETELLIER.

Lieut.-Gouverneur de la Province de Québec.

Monsieur C. Baillargé,
Ingénieur Civil, Québec.

Hotel du Gouvernement.

Québec, 18 juin 1877.

MON CHER MONSIEUR,

S'il vous était possible de passer à mon bureau, j'aurais le plaisir de savoir que vous consentez, à entrer dans le cercle des Auteurs Canadiens, dont je désire m'entourer intimement, de temps à autres à Spencer Wood.

Bien à vous,

L. LETELLIER,

M. C. Baillargé, Québec.

